

8-0! WANDERERS OUTCLASS BANBURY

WYCOMBE WANDERERS produced one of their best performances of the season to thrash Banbury United 8-0 at Loakes Park on Tuesday night. Wanderers completely dominated the Premier Midweek Floodlight League encounter and hit the heights with superb, flowing football and, for once, deadly finishing.

It was a real tonic for the Blues after their disappointing 1-0 Amateur Cup, first round defeat on Saturday, and a triumph for Mick Holifield, who had a nightmare game on Saturday. Mick was at his brilliant best against United, completely bemusing their defence with his speed and skill.

But he wasn't the only hero on the night. Mick Ashwin capped a highly promising display with two well taken goals and his all round game suggested he could be a real asset to the side. His only other performance was in the 3-2 defeat by Carnegie College and he could well fill the centre forward spot, vacated by Keith Searle recently.

The rest of the attack really benefitted from Ashwin's clever use of the ball and while Holifield was virtually unstoppable on the flanks, Tony Amos was always a danger in the middle.

BEST GAME

In midfield Pritchard, Hutchinson and Jameson fought like tigers to take virtually all the 50-50 balls, with all three willing to help out the defence on the few occasions needed. Gerry Olson and Rob Williams looked a formidable pair in the back four, with Williams in particular having one of his best games this term. Olson's power gave the Banbury forwards a miserable night.

But while individuals stood out, it was essentially a team performance. With a wet pitch and drizzle falling throughout the second half, conditions for constructive football were not easy, but the Blues rose to the challenge with precise passing, excellent control and inventive running that completely shattered Banbury.

United on two occasions this season have fielded their youth side for Premier Midweek matches. On Tuesday, however, they had all but three of their first team on duty.

So why didn't it happen against Cheshunt in the Cup on Saturday? The one main difference was that Wanderers converted their chances, although their play was of a higher standard. The referee also had much to do with the result, allowing Wanderers to play football.

Cheshunt's persistent time wasting and fouling never allowed Wycombe to settle on Saturday and, of course, there was the pressure of cup football with a near 2,000 crowd.

Goal number one came from the Blues first corner, Gerry Olson racing up to place a perfect header into the roof of the net from Holifield's flag kick. Goalkeeper Stuart Rennie saved brilliantly from Ashwin before Mick Holifield made it 2-0 after 28 minutes, Holifield shooting home a hard cross from Amos.

Just before half time Mick Ashwin notched his first goal for the club, tailor-made by Holifield. A far post cross by the winger was nodded back by Amos and Ashwin took two paces through the defence before unleashing a strong drive to beat Rennie.

The only danger on the Wycombe net was occasional hesitancy at the back, while Ian Rundle took a long time to get into his stride. Kevin O'Brien too, gave his defence some anxious moments by failing to cut out Hill's dangerous crosses. The pressure, however, didn't last long, and Kevin had a quiet time in the second half.

NO MISTAKE

In the 65th minute Pritchard's measured through ball left Banbury appealing for offside and a clear route for Johnny Hutchinson, who made no mistake. Two minutes later Pritchard rammed home Olson's long free kick, headed on again by Amos.

A poor back pass by Mouldale led to number six, Ashwin

dispossessing the goalkeeper, side-stepping one defender and steering the ball in off the far post with the coolness of a veteran.

Tony Amos, who unselfishly laid on many of the scores, was justly rewarded with a goal in the 75th minute, his back-header beating Rennie and he added another six minutes later when Ashwin's through ball again left the visitors defence in shreds, Amos running on and slotting home the eighth and final goal.

S.E.

WYCOMBE: K. O'Brien, I. Rundle, M. Cooper, R. Williams, G. Olson, K. Jameson, J. Hutchinson, L. Pritchard, M. Holifield, M. Ashwin, A. Amos, sub. A. Horseman (not used).
BANBURY: S. Rennie, E. Kearns, P. Svenson, K. Butler, G. Mouldale, J. Howlett, P. Lines, A. Foster, A. Jacques, G. Crognale, S. Hill, sub. D. Druce (not used).
Half time 3-0 Goalscorers: Wycombe — Olson (10), Holifield (28), Ashwin 2 (44, 62), Hutchinson (55), Pritchard (57), Amos 2 (75, 81).
Attendance: 270.